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Mary Baldwin

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Oxford, England Summer 1974

by Nancy Ambler '75



The sun was shining as I walked through University College's cloisters and quadrangles from my afternoon tutorial to my bicycle resting near Oxford's High. The pleasant warmth and light after weeks of English drizzle and insufferable gray sky prompted me to cycle down a narrow cobblestone back alley and out of town along the Thames Towpath. Several miles downstream, with sailboats, country inns, and houseboats for hire coloring the countryside, I stopped for a shandy at The Trout, a rose-covered riverside pub.

Behind me rose the "dreaming spires of Oxford." An important military outpost in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the town probably was first a gathering place for scholars and intellectuals in the twelfth century. Definitive evidence of the development of a university at Oxford is found first in the form of a papal legate of 1214, but it was not until later in the thirteenth century that colleges, in the modern sense of the term, developed.

Today 34 colleges perpetuate the standards of academic excellence set some 700 years ago by the founders of the first colleges. More tangible traditions, developed over the colleges' centuries of continued growth and prominence exist, perhaps, in the visible aspects of day-to-day life in the university city. College dons in whirling gowns cycle past the perpetual St. Giles' traffic jam; past mirage-like swans and through willow branches overhanging the quiet Rivers Thames and Cherwell; punts are guided (sometimes not-so-skillfully) to the Magdalen Tower dock; tutors read in the cacophony of color that is each college garden; impromptu soccer matches are organized to the delight of the dogs (and their masters) running in the immaculately manicured college playing fields and University Parks—these aspects of life at Oxford are seldom mentioned in a Basic Tourist Guidebook.

To read of Oxford's incomparable libraries, magnificent college chapels, diverse architectural facades, spectacular gardens, and on-going traditions—some seemingly anomalously anachronistic—is to wish immediate transportation to and provision for study in the City of Spires. Indeed, such had been my wish for many years and I was amazed to find it granted this past summer. More amazing, perhaps, was my finding of an Oxford experience to be bigger and better than the projections of my remotest assumptions.

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“... favorite group activities include exploring the colleges
— their chapels, libraries, cloisters and gardens. . . .”

With 24 other students from Davidson and Mary Baldwin Colleges, I participated in a 5½ week study program based at St. Anne's College, Oxford. Assisted by Davidson Professor of English Richard Cole, the group attended morning lectures on “Britain, 1870-1970” sponsored by Exeter College's International Graduate Summer School. Twice weekly members of the fifth Mary Baldwin-Davidson Oxford Program met in groups of threes and fours for intensive English and history tutorials. This venerable English academic institution afforded the participants an opportunity for active criticism and defense of their papers assigned and prepared in advance.

Delivered by such eminent scholars as historian A. J. P. Taylor and poet John Wain, lectures dealt with economic, social, and political influences in the designated time period. Tutorial paper assignments, of course, allowed for concentration on more specific considerations (i.e. “The Influences of Gladstonian Liberalism,” “The Mystic Quality in the Writings of D. H. Lawrence,” or “The Importance of Artistic Commitment in the 1920's.”) Research, excitingly, was undertaken at the Bodleian Library and the Radcliffe Camera amid medieval manuscripts and handsome paneling.

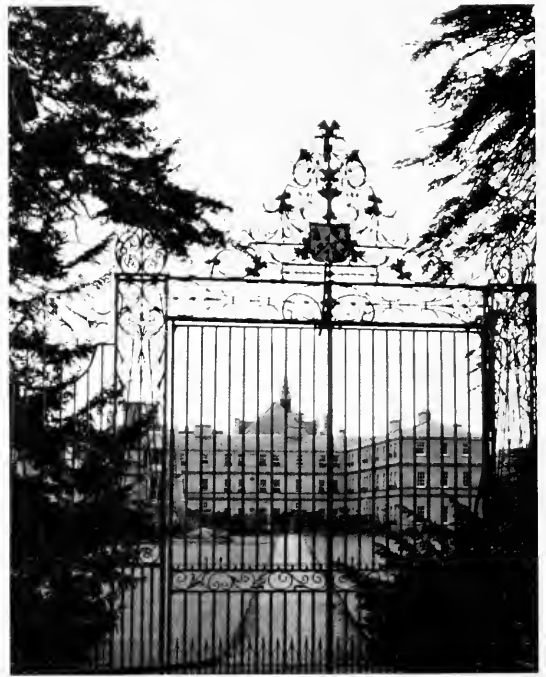


While the nature of the program is obviously academically-oriented, it is probably unrealistic to assume that Oxford and Great Britain go unseen by participants. Tiring quickly of the fare offered at the St. Anne's (Stans) refectory, we often traded such delicacies as fish heads and vanilla eraser-flavored desserts for a simple meal of fresh bread, Cheshire cheese, and mead (a country wine made of fermented honey, grape, and apple juices) served in the garden of one of the many historic Oxford pubs. One evening several of us walked a mile or so across Port Meadow and down the River Thames to enjoy ham biscuits, and lime and lager while watching Morris Dancing at The Perch Inn. Another favorite group haunt, the 13th century Turf Tavern, is guarded on one side by the 11th century city wall and reputed to have been the setting for several episodes of *Jude the Obscure*.

Aside from sampling native fare and pub-crawling, favorite group activities include exploring the colleges—their chapels, libraries, refectories, cloisters, and gardens; meandering through the University's Botanical Gardens, the Christchurch Meadow, and the Magdalen deer park; cycling in the lush rolling Oxfordshire countryside (to Churchill's Bleinheim Palace on one occasion); attending the Proms, the evening Shakespearian productions in the colleges' gardens (replete with fresh strawberries, cream, and mead at intermission); and evensong services (particularly at the magnificent Christchurch chapel.)

While the group divided and subdivided itself for weekend traveling throughout Great Britain, we all shared a common trip to Stratford-on-Avon. After a rainy introduction to the town itself and such important edifices as the homes of Shakespeare, his daughter, John Harvard's mother, and Ann Hathaway, we attended an excellent production by the Royal Shakespeare Company of the Bard's "Richard II." Smaller groups at different times visited London, Bath, Stonehenge, Nottingham, the Cotswolds, North Wales, Scotland, and Southern Ireland. Sports fans patronized the Ascot, the Royal Regatta at Henley, and the tennis tournaments at Wimbledon. Pilgrimages were made to the cathedrals of York, Salisbury, and Canterbury.

Rarely can the whole of an experience be described in the most positive terminology. However, the Oxford session with all its academic and experiential learning, its unforgettable visual images and audible tonalities, and its good times can surely be described in such terms. Personally, it will be remembered as one of the most wonderful experiences of my life!



about the author . . .

Nancy Ambler is a senior majoring in American history. She is president of Phi Alpha Theta, national honorary society in history. As a sophomore, Nancy edited the student newspaper, "Campus Comments," which was awarded two All-American ratings from the Associated Collegiate Press. As a past editor, she now serves as chairman of the campus Board of Publications. President of the Hikers and Backpackers Club, she is also Senate Parliamentarian, a member of the King Series Board, the Educational Policy Committee, and the Laurel society. Nancy is the daughter of Mrs. Harold E. Ambler of Norfolk, Va.

an interview with Emily Wirsing Kelly '63

by *Trudy Willis*, a reporter for the *Roanoke Times*

The newly-elected president of the Mary Baldwin Alumnae Association, Emily Wirsing Kelly (class of 1963) wanted to be an architect, but a high school guidance counselor steered her in another direction: art. "I'm not really sorry, but if I'd been born a man or if I'd been born 10 years later, I'd be an architect now."

Instead, she's a former art teacher who thinks in architectural terms when she has time to bring out her watercolors. "I think in a structural way; when I'm composing a picture I see black and white lines, masses and shapes; not colors like so many artists."

A double-seater baby carriage on the front porch of her "ersatz Victorian" home in a quiet, residential section of Salem, Va., gives part of her secret away. She's the mother of 18-month-old twin girls, Caroline and Anna, as well as of action-packed Whit, a four-year-old with a wild imagination beneath a shock of blond hair.

She's married to Timothy Kelly, vice president of Graham-White Sales Corp. in Salem, which "sells industrial, automotive and railroad parts and equipment that you'd never know existed unless you were in the business." He's on the board of Mill Mountain Playhouse and the Roanoke Fine Arts Center, where she's also involved.

"Between the two of us, we're a little overcommitted in this house," she said, listing some of her civic endeavors—the Junior League, "the fringes of the Science Museum Association," and the Architectural Review Board in Salem.

She is the only artist on the Architectural Review Board, which was created five years ago after a referendum on downtown redevelopment. Her group, which consisted of a businessman, a lawyer, an architect, a builder and an artist (it now has no lawyers and two architects), was supposed to okay changes made on existing building exteriors.

"But the land use plan in Salem tied everybody's hands. The group has no authority. By trying to please everybody, they copped out," she explained, curled in a black armchair that outlined her Dresden doll face. Her twins were napping; Whit and a friend were killing imaginary people hiding in a stack of newspapers, intended for a paper collection, in a closet. She stopped long enough to listen and groan, but the thought of scolding never seemed to enter her mind.



Mrs. Kelly presiding at her first meeting as Alumnae Association president

needlepoint is her hobby;
watercolors are her avocation—



The 82-year-old house which they've lived in since 1968 was in her husband's family. It needed a lot of fixing up when they moved in, but a homey warmth, hinted at by a worn spot on the door and firewood on the porch and carried out inside with neatly grouped local art and homemade needlepoint cushions, fills the atmosphere. She collects local art, but "not consciously; I buy what I like because I like it, not because I want a piece of so-and-so's art."

She hasn't done much of it recently, but she used to trade her art for her friends'. Her two prize possessions are a giant, wooden screwdriver and a watercolor by Allen Ingles Palmer, a Salem artist who died in a plane crash at the height of his career.

Needlepoint is her hobby; watercolors are her avocation. "They bring in money," she said, raising her eyebrows and smiling.

She exhibits every year at the Art Alley show in Salem and had selections in the Parish Painters show at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church in Salem. In the spring, she'll be having a one-man show of drawings and paintings of wildflowers at Hollins College's science building, sponsored by the Science Museum of the Roanoke Valley.

Mrs. Kelly finds most of her subjects in her own yard or at the beach. She sketches them on the spot or captures them on film since "I don't have much time with little itty bitties around; they tend to take off as soon as I take my eyes off them." Nap time used to be her only reprieve, but now Whit escapes that—"He's too old for that." Still, she does "paint a lot, considering. . ."

She figures she'll be tied down to "mothering" for a long time to come, so she hasn't really decided what she'll do when she has the opportunity to go back to work. She might teach, she might go back to school and take architecture; but really, she thinks she'll probably be content to paint.

She'll just think "architecturally" when she has to plot the spaces around her watercolor wildflowers.

Mid-Year Report from the President

I'm taking this opportunity to reflect upon the current year at Mary Baldwin College and to review developments over the fall as well as look ahead to the rest of this year and the year to follow.

Enrollment Report

Mary Baldwin has maintained a stable enrollment during the 1970's. This year our total figure stands at 693 students. Last fall we also admitted 32 transfer students to Mary Baldwin, the largest number in our history.

The profile of our students remains impressive. Students this year come from 36 states and 15 foreign countries, giving us a broad geographical base of representation for the student body. Forty-nine per cent of the students come from Virginia, and the next largest numbers are from North Carolina, Georgia, Texas, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. Aptitude and achievement test scores for this year's entering freshman class remained well above national averages for entering college students, and class standing from high school or preparatory school classes likewise remained high. Moreover, our faculty report that as a group the Class of 1978 has shown genuine interest and determination about their academic work.

Applications for next year's entering freshman class are ahead of the pace of two years ago and also last year's number for this time of year. Thus, we anticipate that approximately 190-200 freshmen will enter in the Class of 1979. Further, we project that our total enrollment for the next several years will remain at approximately the level we have this year, although next year may see a slight over-all drop because of the graduation of the Class of 1975, the largest class ever to enter Mary Baldwin. Our objective for the future is to maintain a selective student body of approximately 700 students.

Program Developments

The implementation of our new educational programs and procedures was quite successful last fall. A modified and improved registration system is being implemented, effective with registration this winter for Terms IV and V.

Last fall we had notable success with our pilot freshman studies course, a coordinated interdisciplinary program. Students and faculty alike are quite pleased with this offering, and we anticipate expanded participation for our freshmen next year.

January Term courses provided new educational opportunities for all of our students, both on campus and beyond. Certain offerings exceeded our expectations in popularity, bringing some enrollment problems, but most students have been able to select either a first or second choice course.

It is particularly noteworthy that over 80 of our students, representing all four classes, undertook "Externships" or experiential learning opportunities off campus through one of the most exciting new dimensions of our program. As an integral part of our emphasis upon career awareness and development, these students worked under the direction of both faculty sponsors and off-campus supervisors in hospitals, law offices, brokerage firms, radio and television stations, business and corporate offices, to name but a few.

Two important mid-year additions to our academic program at the College are a course in career development being offered in Terms IV and V and planning for the full implementation next fall of Special Education offerings to qualify students in our teacher preparation program to work with the mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, and learning disabled—fields in which well-qualified teachers are very much in demand. Strong endorsement and even direct financial support for these two new developments have come from our Advisory Board of Visitors and our Board of Trustees, underscoring their commitment to Mary Baldwin's continuing efforts to provide timely response to our academic needs and opportunities.

Staff and Faculty Changes

In addition to the new faculty appointment in education, several important changes are taking place this year within our administrative staff. Dr. Craven E. Williams, Vice President, resigned January 1 to become Vice President for Development at Davidson College. The loss of Dr. Williams, who served Mary Baldwin so capably in a number of ways for the past seven years, was certainly a difficult one for us. However, we wish him well with his new challenge at Davidson, where he will join Dr. Samuel R. Spencer, Jr., who originally appointed him to the staff of Mary Baldwin when he was then President here.

Dr. Roy K. Patteson, Jr., formerly Director of Development, became Vice President for Development, January 1. A graduate of the University of Richmond and holder of a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from Duke University, Dr. Patteson is also an ordained Presbyterian minister. He is well qualified to take full responsibility for Mary Baldwin's development program, including the New Dimensions Campaign which he formerly directed.

I have also had to accept, with considerable regret, the resignation of Dr. Marjorie B. Chambers as Academic Dean, for reasons of health. Dean Chambers will continue to serve in her post throughout this year and then will return to teaching at Mary Baldwin in religion and philosophy. A student-faculty committee has been appointed to serve as an advisory group for the selection of a new Dean by July 1, 1975. This post is an extremely important one in the life of this College, and we face a formidable task in replacing Dean Chambers, who has given outstanding service to us over the past three years. Our new educational programs are clearly a hallmark of her leadership.

Another new staff appointment will take place in mid-year with the appointment of J. Michael Herndon as Comptroller of the College. Mr. Herndon, an experienced accountant, joins our Treasurer and Business Manager, Freeman Jones, to give added strength to the business and financial operations of the College.

Dr. Patricia Menk, Professor of History and Coordinator of the Division of Social Sciences and Historical Studies, is also serving this year as Director of the ten-year Self-Study we are conducting for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. She has in addition accepted an appointment as Executive Assistant to the President for the remaining months of the Self-Study. A respected teacher and an experienced administrator, Dr. Menk has in the past served on the Staunton City Council and as Mayor of the city.

Financial Developments

Despite current economic conditions, we are very pleased that our determined efforts to maintain a balanced budget for 1974-75 have been successful. As a further measure to safeguard that prospect, the administration and Board of Trustees have curtailed allotted expenditures in our \$3.4 million budget by an additional \$25,000. This sum will be an added contingency reserve fund in addition to one of \$12,000 already set aside in our budget.

Planning is also well under way to sustain a balanced budget for 1975-76. With inflation exceeding ten per cent annually, this goal is difficult, but nonetheless manageable. It will be essential to raise our comprehensive fee by \$300 for next year, which is approximately a seven per cent increase but well below the national rate. We regret the necessity of this action, but are confident that parents will understand that we must absorb increases in food, utilities, and other costs of operation.

New guidelines published nationally by the College Scholarship Service will make it possible next year for greater numbers of families to qualify for financial aid, especially in "middle income" brackets. We will invite students and parents to apply if they have not done so in the past. Also, we anticipate that the Commonwealth of Virginia will provide the continuation of the Tuition Assistance Loan Program or perhaps an outright grant program for those students who presently reside in Virginia. The constitutional amendment passed by the people of Virginia last fall makes a direct grant program possible if the General Assembly passes such legislation.

New Dimensions Campaign

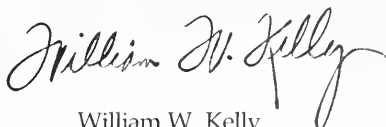
We are pleased with the success thus far of the New Dimensions campaign, our capital fund drive to strengthen our endowment and other financial resources. We presently have over \$2.8 million pledged or given to this campaign. Our total goal over the next three years is to raise \$7.6 million. It is noteworthy that our Trustees and former Trustees have taken a real leadership position by pledging \$1.4 million towards that eventual goal. The Virginia campaign was launched last fall, along with special efforts in other states such as Texas, the Carolinas, and Florida, and we are encouraged by the enthusiastic response we are receiving from many alumnae, parents, and other friends of the institution.

Concluding Comments

We have been exceptionally pleased this year with our campus student leadership. Bobbie Carden, President of the Student Government Association, and all who work with her in positions of leadership, have shown how campus responsibility can be carried out maturely and effectively by students. In conjunction with the fine initiative of our new Dean of Students, Dr. Ethel Smeak, we have seen determined efforts to extend social activities both on and off campus, achieve better communication among students and faculty, and strengthen relationships with the Staunton community.

We are dedicated to providing a meaningful undergraduate experience to each of our students, and we seek your full support and understanding in our continuing commitment to sustaining Mary Baldwin as a leading liberal arts college for women.

I extend every good wish to each Mary Baldwin family that this new year be one of hope and fulfillment for everyone.



William W. Kelly
President

On May 10th, Miss Mary E. Lakenan had a birthday . . .

by Agnes Junkin Peery '31 in consultation with Ruth D. See '31

Not one of us who had been with her while she was Professor of Bible at Mary Baldwin College (from 1927 to 1953) ever thought of her as having birthdays. She was always a part of the here and now, a here and now touched by timeless greatness. Her age did not matter.

The only reason this particular birthday (her 88th) was plucked from the calendar was to create a focal point for celebration, a celebration which sparked the outpouring of letters of remembrance, appreciation and good wishes from former Mary Baldwin students and faculty members.

The fact that Mary E. Lakenan was born and reared in Colorado, graduating Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Colorado with subsequent master's degrees from there and from the Biblical Seminary in New York, the fact that, before coming to Mary Baldwin, she taught not only Bible but psychology, English and German and served a church as D.C.E., the fact that she was a member of The Association of Oriental Research and other scholarly societies and contributed to numerous religious and educational publications help explain her breadth of understanding and variety of interests, but not that "extra something" the letters excitedly reveal.

The letters, bound in book form, were presented to her by six of her former students at a beautiful birthday breakfast prepared and served by loving neighbors in her retirement complex in Pleasant Hill, Tennessee.

Another former student provided orchids for her and other flowers for the hostesses. The breakfast was climaxed with a Y.W.C.A.-type worship service in her apartment. Those who were present felt that the Miss Lakenan they found in the retirement village was the same Miss Lakenan they had known at Mary Baldwin, the one so vividly described in the book of letters they had brought.

Here are condensed excerpts from these letters:

THE TEACHER

You treated us as potential scholars and showed your respect for us by demanding a great deal . . . you demanded that we *think*. . . The childhood Bible stories took on adult meaning. My faith was confirmed by the discovery that the Biblical accounts had literary and intellectual integrity as well as spiritual teaching . . . I was filled with questions. You always had time to answer.

(Miss Lakenan) demanded no sleepy-eyed slothfulness, no vacant-eyed day dreaming, no befuddled unpreparedness, and no tag-along indifference. Whereas, her warmth, understanding, and personal interest in her students were clearly felt, she ruled her class with Queen Victoria's dignity, Solomon's wisdom, Albert Schweitzer's devotion. It was hard to have a teacher who had not missed a class in 20 years. Once when secluded with the flu, I received a box of crisp cookies with a crisper note wishing me a "restful holiday," giving me the reading assignment to help me make the time more "fruitful" and — would I be ready to discuss Jeremiah's relevance for today next class period?

I remember most vividly my sense of affront that Bible study was "required" at Mary Baldwin and, solely for this reason, I would *not* take it my freshman year. I spent the other three regretting this attack of stubbornness and trying to work in every absorbing course. I can still see "The Kings" parading in awesome regimentation across the blackboard, more or less arm-in-arm with "The Prophets," but I can also see the fascinating slides of Joppa and Blake's illustrations of Job, and can still follow Paul on his missionary journeys.

Thank you for leading us, through the understanding of the Word of God, to deeper insight, broader vision, and unfaltering commitment to our Lord.

Your course in comparative religions helped me to become more tolerant . . . Thank you for starting ecumenical thinking in me before it was so current . . . Your teaching did not end in the classroom. Your life has taught the guidelines of Christlikeness.



Miss Mary E. Lakenan (center) reading her book of letters. Those helping celebrate are (left to right) Miss Christine Armstrong '33, Mrs. Melvin H. Shick (Margie Lee Phipps '39), Mrs. Richard Taylor (Virginia White '37), Mrs. Albert G. Peery (Agnes Junkin '31), Dr. Ruth D. See '31, Mrs. Jack Moore (Jean Young '39).

THE KINGDOM

Prominent in my memory are the extra classroom activities like Betty Bickle Home, "Queenie's" Nursery School, Red Cross . . . Never will I forget those worship services we conducted at Western State . . . We went to Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind and read to the blind children and danced with the deaf and blind teenagers . . . In your Middle Mountain cottage you drew together people from mountain coves for worship, Bible study and dramatization during your vacation time. I remember a vivid presentation of "As You Like It" out under the trees on the hillside!

You made me aware of human rights and taught me to try to get inside my brother's skin and look out.

You encouraged me to go to the Student Volunteer Conference in Buffalo where I felt my first definite call to overseas service. And I remember the thrill of receiving funds from the Mary Baldwin Y.W. to help a student in the Agnes Erskine School in Recife.

You opened windows on the world.

"UPPER ROOM" HOSTESS

The Y.W.C.A. cabinet meetings held in your apartment are memorable: . . . the Eastern flavor of refreshments . . . the tinkle of the kettle . . . your pictures, books, china . . . We learned the fine art of making waffles topped with "a'la kings" . . . We drank your tea, planned our programs or discussed problems . . . In your room I realized for the first time that a professor could be a friend!

Every special occasion was remembered not only with a card, but also with the gift of a devotional booklet many of which I use today . . . I still have the picture of St. Francis you gave to each of us at a dinner on the top of Afton Mountain . . . and the little green scarab from Egypt.

Then, of course, there were your talks at Y.W. and Chapel . . . You helped me to discover the joys of creative worship with its consciousness of God.



Y.W.C.A. Cabinet (1950-51) taken with Miss Lakenan in her New Street apartment. Members shown are: (back row, l. to r.) Aletta Jervey, Polly Silling, Patricia Hoshall; (second row, l. to r.) Ellen Martin, Sarah Kames, Miss Lakenan, Sarah Baylor, Mary Porter Phinizy; (front) Ethel Smeak and Frances Morton.

THE EVERYDAY PERSON

I can visualize you standing before us, so small, so vital, so imbued . . . the twinkle in your eye, that keen sense of humor, deep conviction and faith . . . your coming in glowing from autumn walks, your hands filled with autumn leaves.

I remember the apple you brought me during comprehensives . . . your coming into my room at King's Daughter's Hospital bringing me one perfect rose, with love . . . the note you tucked in my hand when my mother was so ill . . . your staying up until the wee small hours of the morning making me a double cheese cloth costume to wear on the Armistice Day float because a single one was not "warm enough" . . . your home open to me for a much needed weekend of rest . . . a gracious charming lady who made all of us want to be better than we were because you saw us that way . . . who believed there was "Good Success" to each of her students.

I remember vividly a lesson you taught me in the sanctity of all created things. I stepped on an ant hill one day, delighting, I suppose, in my show of power. You made it quite clear to me that life, even in the smallest insects, is a miraculous gift of God. I still look at ants with a kind of awe.

Without knowing it, I absorbed an attitude toward life from you, an acceptance of all things on God's terms.

In the description of Olivet you wrote "Amidst great sweeps of desert and sky one can only see the great, the eternal: and life is purged of its littleness." That is the essence of you!

THE CONTINUING FRIEND

After graduation it was you who pushed the door open to new experiences and deeper study. Your trust and encouragement, your pride in my small accomplishments, have given importance to the tasks I have undertaken.

I still have the lovely poems you gave me when I was married, poems about "drying the dishes together" and "breaking the china cup" . . . You have held my hand through the major experiences of my life. I do not think I would have been able to adapt to the changes brought to my thinking by my children had it not been for you.

You have showed me many things: a balance between body and spirit, between daring and caution, how to appraise new movements without either discarding them without study or accepting them gullibly, how to keep an open mind based on a sure faith, how to make commonplace acts effective through love.

Even when you, too, had "graduated" from Mary Baldwin, your ministry to persons did not stop—through teaching, through worship, through friendship, you ministered to the troubled and confused, the mentally disturbed, the less advantaged in race and opportunity. With your faith deeply rooted, you have continued to reach out in many directions, finding new implications in that faith. We, your learners, have marvelled at your constant learning.

Your "diminishment" (Teilhard de Chardin's term for one's still dynamic latter years) is gloriously revealing of the greatness of God and the human spirit. And so, on your birthday, we say "Thank you."

My friend, Lillian

by Stephen R. Henderson

Dr. Lillian A. Pennell is certainly not the most visible person on the Mary Baldwin College campus. (Did you ever try to get around these hills in a wheelchair?) I could write a very impressive article about my friend and colleague by simply listing her many accomplishments and recognitions. I have chosen, however, to list these accomplishments in an appendix following this article. It isn't because of these accomplishments that Lillian is great; but because of the inner strength that has enabled her to touch so many lives.

* * *

I first heard about Dr. Lillian Pennell when I was urged to consider an open position at the Career and Personal Counseling Center (formerly the Presbyterian Guidance Center) adjoining the Mary Baldwin campus. The person who approached me impressed upon me the honor of working with the woman who was considered the "mother of counseling" in the Presbyterian Church.

I was told about the tragic accident that made her a quadriplegic and about the courage, faith and strength she exhibited in going from what many considered to be a "vegetable state" to becoming one of the most outstanding leaders in the counseling field. Dr. Pennell began the counseling service shortly after World War II as an expression of her Christian faith and desire to help others make life decisions. That "service" grew into a network that now includes 16 counseling centers throughout the country.

I must admit though, at that time, Dr. Pennell was pictured to me as an "institution" rather than a live, warm person. Because of this I almost didn't bother to come to Staunton.

I "pictured" an old, overly-serious, shriveled-up cripple who, with every good intention in the world, was dabbling in an area in which she and the church had no business. I imagined that she, like many of the other leaders in the counseling field, had made her impressive mark in history and was sitting back enjoying her laurels.

However, there was something in the enthusiasm when anyone talked about her that told me there was a lot more to the woman than I imagined and therefore I came to Staunton. That was eight years ago and my "picture" couldn't have been more wrong!

Because of her wheelchair, of course, one of the first things Lillian needs to be able to do in order to relate effectively to others is to make them at ease with the idea that she is handicapped. I doubt that this is anything that she does consciously, but her own quiet confidence is such that one is almost immediately at ease. For example, I sang in a choir with Lillian and I often waited for her to give *me* the lead as to when I should stand.

Those of us who have followed Lillian for any length of time have to laugh at others who think that because she's in a wheelchair she doesn't get around much. In spite of her physical handicaps she is extremely active both mentally and physically. She is not afraid to tackle projects that are new to her or to explore ideologies that are foreign to her. She is continually re-evaluating and changing her own ideas and her approaches to life and counseling. She is not an "institution" at all, but an exciting, vibrant, and growing individual.

Lillian Pennell at work in her office.



Unlike many of us who even have headaches, Lillian rarely uses her physical handicaps as an excuse not to participate in anything. She participates in many church, community, and statewide activities. An ingenious lift on her car permits her almost complete mobility with just one friend to accompany her. This year she even turned to sports and won second place in table tennis at the National Wheelchair Games in Spokane, Washington. (I suspect she will soon be negotiating for a professional contract!)

Throughout her 19 years at Mary Baldwin, Lillian has taught and counseled students, and even had students live with her from time to time. At the Counseling Center we are well aware of the effect that she has on the College because of the many alumnae that make a special effort to come by and see her whenever they are in the area.

It is not unusual for Lillian to remember names and many details about counselees that she has had even 20 or 25 years ago. It is particularly embarrassing to me that she is often quicker to remember the names of counselees that I had three years ago than I am myself!

For the many who have had contact with this woman, few have failed to be touched by the special personal warmth and magnetism that make her so unique. If you are one of the more than 2,000 counselees or one of the many friends or colleagues that has been touched by Lillian, then you have been lucky indeed. If not, the next time you're visiting Mary Baldwin, I hope you will take the opportunity to meet Lillian and visit the Counseling Center that her love and leadership created.



Lillian and author Stephen Henderson.

about the author . . .

Stephen R. Henderson was a counselor and Associate Director of the Career and Personal Counseling Center for seven years. He is currently a consultant to the Center and a leader of group work in communication skills in the community of Staunton. Beginning in February, Stephen will be teaching a new Mary Baldwin course in personal and career development.



Proclamation

Whereas, Lillian A. Pennell has brought great honor to this community for the past twenty-five years, and

Whereas, Ms. Pennell has provided dynamic leadership in the field of career and personal counseling in her church and community, and

Whereas, Ms. Pennell initiated a counseling program which has resulted in national impact, and

Whereas, by her courage, she has inspired those having contact with her to develop strength and faith by confronting hardship, and

Whereas, she has unselfishly given of her personal love and professional expertise to thousands of people,

Now, Therefore, I,

Richard A. Harrier, Mayor of the City of Staunton,
do hereby proclaim the week of November 11-18, 1973,
as

Lillian A. Pennell — National Career Guidance Week

LILLIAN A. PENNELL

- 1943 B.A. in chemistry-physics, Erskine College, South Carolina.
- 1942-43 Taught chemistry and athletics at high school level.
- 1948 Became the first quadraplegic ever admitted to a rehabilitation center in the United States.
- 1948 Began the Lexington Presbytery Vocational Guidance Service; later became the Presbyterian Guidance Center; and still later became the Career and Personal Counseling network.
- 1955 Counseling Center, with Dr. Pennell as Director, moved to Mary Baldwin.
- 1959 M.S. in counselor education, Pennsylvania State University.
- 1969 Ed.D. in Personnel Services, University of Florida.
- 1969 Honorary doctorate, Doctor of Humanities, Erskine College.

1973

Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Career and Personal Counseling Center network, founded by Dr. Pennell, which now includes 16 counseling centers.

Awards:

- Outstanding Handicapped Person of the Year in Virginia, 1963.
- Fiftieth Anniversary Outstanding Rehabilitant in South Carolina, 1970.
- First woman elder, Tinkling Springs Presbyterian Church, 1971.
- First counselor of the year, Central Valley Personnel and Guidance Association, 1972.
- Handicapped Professional Woman of the Year, Virginia District; and runner-up in international division, Pilot Club International, 1974.
- Elected to various offices in local, state and national guidance associations.

**Alumnae Homecoming
and Reunions**

May 2, 3, 4, 1975

Reunions will be held for the classes of
1925–50th

1930	1955
1935	1960
1940	1965
1945	1970
1950	1974

Also, the Choir of Mary Baldwin College will celebrate 25 years with a reunion of all former members.

Mary Baldwin

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